

April 18th, 2005 — Subject: Probation After Death

DEAR FRIENDS: Mary Baker Eddy gave her students 26 subjects for weekly Bible Lessons, to be covered twice yearly. Flowing through the year in her order of the subjects, we hereby present fresh views of each one by outstanding Christian Scientists. In this way, we hope to partake with you of new unfoldments of her infinite revelation.

Our first selection this week is from John Doorly's TALKS ON THE SCIENCE OF THE BIBLE VOLUME 1. The second selection is from -MARY BAKER EDDY- A LIFE SIZE PORTRAIT- by Lyman Powell.

Mind as Mind

Now we come to the first day of creation. "And God said, Let there be light," and "God saw the light, that it was good," and "God called the light Day." You have three distinct statements, three distinct tones.

"And God said, Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3) – infinite Mind is forever declaring from everlasting to everlasting, "I am the infinite intelligence," and that light comes to you and me as the wisdom to choose the good,-the wisdom that made Moses say, "I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt" (Ex. 3: 3), the wisdom that comes to each one of us to enquire and seek. "Immortal and divine Mind presents the idea of God: first, in light" (S. & H. 503:20-21). "Light is a symbol of Mind" (S. & H. 510:27). Subjectively, God is declaring that He is the infinite intelligence from everlasting to everlasting. God never said anything that He hadn't said before. God is the infinite intelligence – "the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8). As thought grasps that, it comes to you and me as wisdom, the wisdom to choose the good.

Mind as Spirit

Then you get the tone of Mind as Spirit: "And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness" (Gen. 1:4). The infinite intelligence, the infinite Mind, is forever declaring itself as the infinite good, which is always associated with Spirit. That comes to you and to me as the allness of God. Mrs. Eddy says, 'God is good. Good is Mind' (S. & H. 113:17), and also, "God,

Spirit, dwelling in infinite light and harmony from which emanates the true idea, is never reflected by aught but the good” (S. & H. 503:28-2). And so on this first day the infinite intelligence now says, “Intelligence is good.” That comes to you and me as the allness of God, the allness of Mind. Spirit always gives you a sense of the onliness of God, and the onliness of Mind is its allness.

Mind as Soul

Finally, you get the third tone of Mind: “And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night” (Gen. 1:5). If you know your tones, you will know at once that this is Mind as Soul, because Soul names everything. That which is Mind says, “Infinite intelligence is called day.” Mrs. Eddy’s definition of “day” is “The irradiance of Life; light, the spiritual idea of Truth and Love” (S. & H. 584:1-2). So “day” always symbolizes a measure of Life, Truth, and Love. You will remember that Mrs. Eddy says, “The creative Principle – Life, Truth, and Love – is God” (S. & H. 502:27-28).

“And the evening and the morning were the first day” (Gen. 1: 5) – the first glimpse of Life, Truth, and Love. All the days give glimpses of Life, Truth, and Love, – growing, increasing, and developing, in an ordered way. Remember that these writers were using as symbols things that were familiar to them, – the light and the darkness and the day and the night. For the Israelites the day started at sunset and went on until sunset the next evening. So the day started with the evening, the sense of rest and peace after the day’s work. Mrs. Eddy defines “evening” from two aspects: “Mistiness of mortal thought; weariness of mortal mind; obscured views; peace and rest” (S. & H. 586:1-2). It is the sense of peace and rest that is indicated here. Her definition of “morning” is “Light; symbol of Truth; revelation and progress” (S. & H. 591:23-24). So out of peace and rest, out of quietness and calmness (you know that you never get reflection in water unless it is calm), there comes revelation. And then as the day develops, you get glimpses of Life, Truth, and Love. Mrs. Eddy writes, “Was not this a revelation instead of a creation?” (S. & H. 504:14-15). God is “the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.” So is being. “As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.” “The successive appearing of God’s ideas is represented as taking place on so many evenings and mornings, – words which indicate, in the absence of solar time, spiritually clearer views of Him, views which are not implied by material darkness

and dawn. Here we have the explanation of another passage of Scripture, that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years" (S. & H. 504:16-23).

The Hebrew people believed that the nature of God was sevenfold, and that they would understand God progressively, but that it would take seven thousand years; and so it would take a thousand years for each aspect of God to be revealed. According to this belief, so it was in the Scriptures. The first thousand-year period of the Bible undoubtedly has the tone of Mind, the creative sense. The second thousand-year period has the tone of Spirit. The third thousand-year period has the tone of Soul. The fourth thousand-year period has the tone of Principle, of system. When Jesus came, in the fifth period, he said to the Hebrews, in effect, "I am not come to destroy your system, but to fulfil it. You say that there are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest" – a "month" was a symbol of a thousand-year period. At that time they had had four thousand-year periods – they had gained some sense of Mind, Spirit, Soul, and Principle – and they thought that there were another three thousand-year periods to come. But Jesus was not thinking in terms of time, but of eternity, and he said to them, in effect, "Truth has nothing to do with time. I say to you that the fields are already white and that we should gather the harvest" (see John 4:35). And so today we see how we can gather the harvest, because Science is ever-present. We have got to think in the fourth dimension, where there is no time and no place, but just reality.

You will notice that in her chapter on Genesis Mrs. Eddy gives a clear indication of the period in Bible history corresponding to each day of creation. She says, "Here we have the explanation of another passage of Scripture, that 'one day is with the Lord as a thousand years.' The rays of infinite Truth, when gathered into the focus of ideas, bring light instantaneously, whereas a thousand years of human doctrines, hypotheses, and vague conjectures emit no such effulgence" (S. & H. 504:21-26). *Materia medica*, with its thousands of years of theory, could never have healed that child with venereal disease, but "the rays of infinite Truth," "gathered into the focus of ideas," healed it decisively. The prism of Science breaks up the light of Truth into seven colours, the seven days of creation, and they are the "rays of infinite Truth." As you break up Truth through the prism of Science into rays of Truth, you begin to understand Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, and Love,

and you begin to grasp each one of those synonymous terms as idea. Each one of us has had the experience of discerning some aspect of Truth as idea, and that idea has done what thousands of years of human thought could never accomplish. “Immortal Mind makes its own record, but mortal mind, sleep, dreams, sin, disease, and death have no record in the first chapter of Genesis” (S. & H. 505:1-3).

We are still considering Mind as Soul – “And God called the light Day” (Gen. 1:5). That was the divine law, and Mind is always law. That naming was the divine law. In this first day, Mind says as Soul, “I am the divine law, I am the rule of Soul.” And that comes to you and me as a true record, – “Let there be light, Let there be a firmament, Let the dry land appear,” and so on. Mrs. Eddy says, “Immortal Mind makes its own record” (S. & H. 505:1-2). Funk and Wagnalls’ dictionary defines “record” as “A word of wide signification, applying to any writing, mark, or trace that serves as a memorial giving enduring attestation of an event or a fact.” Mrs. Eddy says, “The harmony and immortality of man are intact. We should look away from the opposite supposition that man is created materially, and turn our gaze to the spiritual record of creation, to that which should be engraved on the understanding and heart ‘with the point of a diamond’ and the pen of an angel” (S. & H. 521:12-17).

“And the evening and the morning were the first day” (Gen. 1:5). Mrs. Eddy says, “The objects of time and sense disappear in the illumination of spiritual understanding, and Mind measures time according to the good that is unfolded. This unfolding is God’s day, and ‘there shall be no night there’” (S. & H. 584:4-8). She writes, “Mind measures time according to the good that is unfolded,” and that is true of the days of creation. But when you reach absolute Science and the days of creation become numerals of consciousness, then you see that “the numerals of infinity, called seven days, can never be reckoned according to the calendar of time” (S. & H. 520:10-11). You don’t get the sense of time any longer, because you see that they are numerals of infinity.

MARY BAKER EDDY by Lyman Powell

One of the faithful reports the substance of the little Easter sermon she preached to her household. Though the text has slipped from memory, the context would indicate that it was from Ephesians IV:

22-24. That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Mrs. Eddy said: You must get rid of the old man, the old woman; you cannot make them better and keep them. You are not getting rid of the old man if you try to make him better. If you should succeed in making him better, he would stay with you. If you patch up the old and say it is good enough, you do not put it off, but keep it. If you try to make the old man satisfactory, you are preparing to keep it, not to put it off.

We have but one Mind; and to abide in this perfect freedom of individuality is the resurrection, – is to have risen above material or lower demands. The resurrective sense is positive; it is “yea, yea and nay, nay.” The resurrective sense does not listen compromisingly to error. It is always about its “ Father’s business,” – reflecting Principle. Jesus’ whole life was resurrective; that is, his life was a constant conscious rising spiritually above sin, sickness, death; and his resurrection from the grave was to sense a type of divine Love’s final triumph over the human belief that matter is substance, or has power to impose limitations to Mind or man.

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